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firebrands. So in a small brick room put up by Bishop Tucker in 1911, and now the secondary school's common-room, I met a bunch of schoolmasters, all fluent in English, well-informed and politically-minded.

I put to them the question that most puzzled me; land reforms are unquestionably progressive and of benefit to Africans; by raising living standards they will advance the prospect of self-government; why, then, do so many educated Africans appear to oppose them?

The answer I got was unexpected. Mr. Samwell Ayan, a history teacher, a Makerere graduate, head of the Kenya Teachers' Union and an elected member of the District Council that was embroiled in trouble, spoke impressively—and with moderation and logic.

'People are not getting justice,' he said. 'Men are losing land they are entitled to because of bribery and corruption in the African Courts. Everyone is being bribed—land elders, chiefs, witnesses. Yes, from the African Courts a man can take his case before the D.C., but what can the D.C. do? He sees only the evidence in front of him; it is all rigged; the man loses his land. I know of many cases like that. The Courts are rotten—a washout.

'I know of a case where the president of the Court altered all the evidence after it had been given and sent it up to the superior Court. When the plaintiff heard the false evidence read out, he was hopelessly confused. Clerks take bribes to keep appeal cases beyond the date when the right to appeal lapses. This is being done even in Kisumu. All the land elders can be bribed. The hunger for land is so great.

'What should be done? First, hear land cases before everyone in the location who has, or is entitled to, land—a real people's court. Then, make tape-recordings of evidence in the lower courts; if the evidence is changed, everyone will know. And let the district officer take all land cases so that he hears everything.

'It is because of this corruption and unfairness that people oppose land consolidation. All the same, it has got to come. It is progressive. But do not let it be forced.'

Mr. Ayan spoke with sincerity and even passion. This

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question of bribery and corruption crops up everywhere and all concerned on the official side recognize it as their deepest enemy. But when I put Mr. Ayan's points to them they were a little sceptical. 'Of course there is bribery,' they said, 'but it is not as bad as that. And it is not the people who oppose land reforms, it is the politicians.' Mr. Ayan had just sent a telegram to the Governor asking for the removal of the 'reactionary D.C.' in Kisumu, so relations were naturally a bit strained.

VI

On the way to Maseno we had passed the ostensible *casus belli* between District Council and Government: the Kisiani hills, a barren, rocky bluff entirely denuded of vegetation and a scene of the most gruesome erosion, given over to goats browsing on boulders and any indomitable weed that had managed to germinate. This place had been leased by the District Council to the Government for the purpose of afforestation and about 800 acres of trees had been planted at a cost of £13,000.

Afforestation is unpopular. Goats were allowed to destroy the Kisiani seedlings and, when the forest department put up fences, people came and tore them down in the night. Others started to cultivate in defiance not only of the terms of the lease, but of regulations which forbid cultivation on steep hillsides. All this, in the official view, was part of a deliberate political campaign to stir up anti-Government feeling.

The Kisiani quarrel brought to a head bad feeling between the Central Nyanza District Council and the Government. All the Councillors are African save for the chairman, who is the D.C. Most of its senior technical staff are European and, in particular, it employs (as do all District Councils with large revenues) a fully qualified accountant to manage its finances.

Those elected Councillors most anxious for unrestricted freedom objected strongly to this accountant. Africans, they said, should have the spending of African money without European interference. Officials retorted that in proper,